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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT
OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION

No. CV-09-303-RHW

Plaintiff,

COMPLAINT IN
INTERVENTION

ANDREA RAMALES

Plaintiff-Intervenor

JURY DEMAND

vs.

LA PIANTA, LLC dba FRENCHMAN
HILLS VINEYARD, LLC,

Defendant.

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This is an action for civil rights violations. Plaintiff-Intervenor Andrea
Ramales was an employee of Defendant La Pianta, LLC dba Frenchman

1 Hills, LLC (“Frenchman Hills”) in Adams County, Washington until May
2 17, 2008. During the course of her employment Plaintiff-Intervenor was
3 sexually harassed by her immediate supervisor at Frenchman Hills. As a
4 result of this sexual harassment, Plaintiff-Intervenor was constructively
5 discharged from Frenchman Hills in violation of Title VII of the United
6 States Civil Rights Act and the Washington Law Against Discrimination.
7 Plaintiff-Intervenor brings this action to obtain redress for the harm she has
8 suffered and continues to suffer as a result of the Defendant’s unlawful
9 conduct.
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11

12 **II. JURISDICTION AND PARTIES**

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14 2.1 This court has jurisdiction of Plaintiff-Intervenor’s federal law claims
15 pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§451, 1331, 1337, 1343 and 1345. This action is
16 authorized and instituted pursuant to sections 706(f)(1) and (3) of Title VII
17 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, 42 U.S.C. sections 2000e-
18 5(f)(1) and (3) (“Title VII”), and Section 102 of the Civil Rights Act of
19 1991, 42 U.S.C. §1981a.
20

21 2.2 This court has jurisdiction of the Plaintiff-Intervenor’s state law claims
22 under 28 U.S.C. §1367(a) (supplemental jurisdiction), as these claims are

1 so related to the federal claims as to form part of the same case or
2 controversy under Article III of the United States Constitution.

3 2.3 The employment practices alleged to be unlawful were committed within
4 the jurisdiction of the United States District Court for the Eastern District
5 of Washington.

6
7 2.4 Plaintiff, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (“EEOC”), is
8 the agency of the United States of America charged with the
9 administration, interpretation and enforcement of Title VII, and is
10 expressly authorized to bring this action by Section 706(f)(1) of Title VII,
11 42 U.S.C. §2000e-5(f)(1).

12
13 2.5 The Plaintiff-Intervenor Andrea Ramales is a resident of Washington State.

14 2.6 At all relevant times, Frenchman Hills has been a corporation continuously
15 doing business in the State of Washington and has continuously had at
16 least 15 employees.

17
18 2.7 At all relevant times, Defendant Frenchman Hills has continuously been an
19 employer engaged in an industry affecting commerce within the meaning
20 of Sections 701(b), (g) and (h) of Title VII, 42 U.S.C. §§2000e-(b), (g) and
21 (h).

1 2.8 At all times relevant to this complaint, Defendant has continuously been an
2 employer within the meaning of the Washington Law Against
3 Discrimination. RCW 49.60.040; RCW 49.60.180.
4

5 **III. EXHAUSTION OF ADMINISTRATIVE REMEDIES**

6 3.1 On July 24, 2008 Plaintiff-Intervenor filed a charge of discrimination with
7 the EEOC against Frenchman Hills. After it assumed jurisdiction and
8 investigated Ms. Ramales' charge, the EEOC, on February 20, 2009,
9 issued a formal Determination that there is reasonable cause to believe that
10 Defendant subjected Plaintiff-Intervenor to a sexually offensive and hostile
11 work atmosphere at Frenchman Hills.
12

13 3.2 An attempt was made by the EEOC to resolve this case without litigation.
14 However, conciliation failed on or before April 29, 2009.
15

16 3.3 On or about February 20, 2009 the EEOC concluded their investigation of
17 the case involving Plaintiff-Intervenor and filed the instant action in federal
18 court on September 30, 2009.
19
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IV. FACTS

4.1 At all times relevant to this complaint, Defendant Frenchman Hills employed more than fifteen people in and around Adams County, Washington.

4.2 The Plaintiff-Intervenor Andrea Ramales performed labor for Frenchman Hills from May 3, 2008 until May 17, 2008 at the request and under the direction and control of Defendant and its agents.

4.3 Defendant employed Alberto Camacho as a foreman and supervisor at all relevant times.

4.4 During her employment with Defendant, Plaintiff-Intervenor was sexually harassed by Supervisor Camacho resulting in her constructive discharge.

4.5 Plaintiff-Intervenor was forced to endure unwanted sexual contact and intimidating and unwelcomed sexual overtures by Supervisor Camacho, although she made clear that she wanted the harassment to stop.

4.6 Plaintiff-Intervenor was not provided with a Frenchman Hills company policy to report sexual harassment, and Supervisor Camacho was her only known supervisor.

1 4.7 The sexual harassment by Supervisor Camacho was severe and pervasive
2 and altered the working conditions and create a hostile work environment
3 for Plaintiff-Intervenor.
4

5 4.8 Defendant's conduct created a hostile work environment so intolerable for
6 Plaintiff-Intervenor that any reasonable person would find such treatment
7 offensive.
8

9 4.9 The extreme conduct of Supervisor Camacho was done in a willful and
10 wanton manner, and constituted a disregard for the rights and wellbeing of
11 Plaintiff-Intervenor that resulted in her constructive discharge on May 17,
12 2008.
13

14 **V. STATEMENT OF CLAIMS**

15 I. SEXUAL HARASSMENT- 42 U.S.C. §2000e-2(a)

16 5.1 Plaintiff-Intervenor re-alleges and incorporates by reference all allegations
17 set in the preceding paragraphs as if set forth herein.
18

19 5.2 By subjecting Plaintiff-Intervenor to unwelcome sexual comments and
20 acts, and permitting and encouraging a work environment in which she was
21 subject to ridicule, harassment, discrimination, assault and intimidation
22

1 because of her sex, Defendant discriminated against Plaintiff-Intervenor in
2 violation of §§ 703(a) of Title VII, 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000e-2(a).

3 5.3 The effect of the practices complained of above has been to deprive
4 Plaintiff-Intervenor of equal employment opportunities.

5 5.4 The unlawful employment practices complained of were intentional.

6 5.5 The unlawful employment practices complained of were done with malice
7 or with reckless indifference to Plaintiff-Intervenor's federally protected
8 rights.
9

10 II. WASHINGTON STATE LAW AGAINST DISCRIMINATION- RCW
11 49.60.030; RCW 49.60.180.

12 5.6 Plaintiff-Intervenor re-alleges and incorporates by reference all allegations
13 set in the preceding paragraphs as if set forth herein.

14 5.7 Plaintiff-Intervenor was subjected to unlawful workplace sexual
15 harassment in violation of the Washington Law Against Discrimination.
16 RCW 49.60.030; RCW 49.60.180.
17

18 5.8 As a woman, Plaintiff-Intervenor is a member of the class protected from
19 discrimination and sexual harassment under this law.
20

21 5.9 Plaintiff-Intervenor was subjected to unlawful workplace sexual
22 harassment in violation of the Washington Law Against Discrimination

1 when she was subjected to unwelcome intentional conduct, which occurred
2 because of her gender, and which affected the terms and conditions of her
3 employment.
4

5 VI. PRAYER FOR RELIEF

6 Wherefore, Plaintiff-Intervenor requests this Court:

- 7 6.1 Award Plaintiff-Intervenor all damages to which she is entitled, including,
8 but not necessarily limited to, all special, general, compensatory, punitive
9 or other damages pursuant to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act (42 U.S.C.
10 2000e et seq.); the Washington Law Against Discrimination (RCW
11 Chapter 49.60); or as otherwise authorized by law;
12
13 6.2 Award Plaintiff-Intervenor the costs of this suit; and
14
15 6.3 Award Plaintiff-Intervenor such other relief as the court may deem just and
16 equitable¹.
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20 ¹ The Northwest Justice Project (NJP) is a recipient of federal funds from the Legal Services Corporation (LSC). 45
21 CFR§ 1642.3 prohibits a recipient of federal LSC funds from claiming, or collecting and retaining attorneys' fees in
22 any case undertaken on behalf of a client. The prohibition applies to NJP and its employees. It does not limit or
pre-empt the court's statutory duties, nor does it operate as a waiver of the Plaintiff's rights under state or federal

1 SIGNED this 16th of October, 2009.

2
3 NORTHWEST JUSTICE PROJECT

4
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22 law. The court is free to make its own disposition of any fee that it may determine to be appropriate in this case,
23 with the understanding that NJP may not receive the fee.

24 COMPLAINT IN INTERVENTION - 9

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